

**U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**  
**Emergency Condition Notification Form**

**Date:** Saturday June 11, 2011

**Time:** 10 AM (MDT)

**Facility Affected:** Yellowtail Dam **River(s) Affected:** Bighorn River

**Organizations Receiving this Notification:**

Big Horn County Disaster and Emergency Services

Crow Tribe

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Montana Department of Transportation

National Park Service at Ft. Smith

National Weather Service Forecaster – Billings

Montana State Disaster & Emergency Services – District V, Billings

Montana State Disaster & Emergency Services – Helena

US Army Corps of Engineers – Omaha, Nebraska

Bureau of Reclamation - Great Plains Regional Office

Treasure, Rosebud, and Custer County Dispatch 24-hr Warning Points

**Condition Description**

Current Conditions – Yellowtail Dam and Bighorn River:

- Reservoir Elevation: 3633.17 feet
- Reservoir Release: 15,500 cubic-feet per second (cfs)
- 24-hour average inflow: 19,000 cfs
- Feet to Fill (Top of Joint-Use): 6.83 feet

**No change in releases from Yellowtail Dam to the Bighorn River is scheduled today.**

In accordance with the Emergency Action Plan for Yellowtail Dam, releases in excess of 14,000 cfs place Yellowtail Dam into an elevated response level requiring notifications to downstream authorities and affected agencies. **This condition is only a result of releases from Yellowtail Dam exceeding 14,000 cfs. There are no dam safety related conditions or concerns with Yellowtail or Yellowtail Afterbay Dams.**

**1. Potential River Levels and Times of Arrival**

The following provides the approximate travel times and river stage rises from Yellowtail Dam to reach key locations along the Bighorn River:

<u>Bighorn River Location</u>	<u>Approximate Travel Time</u>	<u>Approximate River Stage Increase</u>
Two Leggins Bridge	7-9 hours	N/A
Hardin	10-12 hours	N/A
Confluence with the Yellowstone River	24 hours	N/A

## **2. Actions Taken by Reclamation**

Reclamation's revised runoff forecast currently projects releases from Yellowtail Dam will need to average 15,500 cfs on a daily basis throughout June in order to pass our projected inflows into Bighorn Reservoir. Actual daily releases may exceed 15,500 cfs for periods during this time frame.

Reclamation continues to operate in accordance with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Flood Control Manual (Manual) for Yellowtail Dam and Bighorn Lake. Additionally, Reclamation has and will continue to coordinate very closely with the Big Horn County Disaster and Emergency Services, Crow Tribe, Corp of Engineers, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Montana Department of Transportation regarding our daily operations.

In accordance with the Manual, releases will be managed, to the extent possible, to prevent the following flows from being exceeded:

20,000 cfs at St. Xavier (Gauging Station at Afterbay Dam)  
25,000 cfs at Bighorn (confluence with Yellowstone River)

## **3. Actions Expected of Downstream Agencies**

Be advised that releases at or above 15,500 cfs will likely continue for the next several weeks. Reclamation is requesting that Big Horn County DES notify landowners living along the Bighorn River below Yellowtail Dam who occupy low lying areas that they are subject to potential flooding. Additionally, Reclamation is requesting that Bighorn County DES notify these affected property owners of the following:

- Reclamation's ability to respond to localized storm events downstream of Yellowtail Dam and provide relief by reducing releases from the dam is unlikely.
- Releases at or above 15,500 cfs are anticipated to continue for the next few weeks.
- Strongly encourage affected property owners to take all appropriate precautions, including sandbagging or other measures, to protect their possessions and property.

## **4. For Additional Information**

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## **6. Media Inquiries:**

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